Pradesh were not supplying levy cement to the State Government; and if so, what is the reaction of Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) It has been Government's policy to progressively reduce the levy obligations of the cement factories. However, no decision has been taken on lifting of levy on cement production totally.

(b) Complaints have been received from some consignees regarding short supply of levy cement by cement factories located in Andhra Pradesh. The Development Commissioner for Cement Industry has taken up the matter with the concerned cement factories to step-up despatches.

Uniformation Power Tariff

3333. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL:
PROF. C. LAKSHMANNA:

Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to introduce a uniform pattern of power tariff in the country;

(b) if so, what steps have been taken in this regard;

(c) whether the desirability of rationalising the coal price on F.O.R. basis for all the thermal plants in the country has been considered; and

(d) if so, what are the reasons for not introducing such a scheme so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF POWER IN THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (SHRI KALPNATH RAI): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Under the Electricity (Supply) Act, 1948, the power to fix tariff for supply of electricity to various categories of consumers vests in the State Electricity Boards/Electricity Departments.

(c) and (d) Presently, there is no proposal to make any change in the existing arrangements for fixing the price of various grades of coal.

Request of Punjab Government for setting up a Gas Based Power Plant

3334. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government have received a request from the Punjab Government for setting up of a gas-based power plant in the State;

(b) if so, whether the plea has been found to be just and deserved acceptance;

(c) if not, what are the reasons therefor; and

(d) what is the distance between the place suggested by the Punjab Government for setting up the project and the one in Haryana where a similar project has been cleared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF POWER IN THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (SHRI KALPNATH RAI): (a) No project proposal has been received from the Punjab Government in regard to setting up of a gas-based power plant in the State.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Unauthorised agents in Connaught Place Post Office

3335. SHRI JERLIE E. TARIANG: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some unauthorised agents are working in the Post Office at 'A' Block, Connaught Place, New Delhi;

(b) whether it is also a fact that with the connivance of postal employees these agents extract big amount from the foreigners and businessmen for clearance of parcels and booking of money orders and other postal services; and

(c) whether Government have received any complaints in this regard during the last six months; if so, what are the details thereof and action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI GIRIDHAR GOMANGO): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No. Sir.

Protection or the indigenous industry of sophisticated diagnostic equipment

3336. SHRI KAILASH PATI MISHRA: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether indigenous manufacturers of sophisticated diagnostic equipment like whole body scanners have complained to Government against duty-free inmports of machines from multinational companies;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken to protect the indigenous industry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) and (b) Some of the indigenous manufacturers of medical equipments have represented against the existing provisions in the Customs Notification allowing duty free import of medical equipments by Government Hospitals/Charitable Institutions against NMIC certificate from the Head of the Institution/DGTD and essentiality certificate from DGHS.

(c) Indigenous manufacturers are allowed to import components for the manufacture of medical equipment at concessional rate of duty.

Complaints Against inflated local call Bill

3337. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have conducted any study to ascertain the general causes of subscribers' complaints against inflated local call bills in cities;

(b) if so what are the main causes that have come to Government's notice in this regard; and

(c) what system has been devised to check the diversion of lines to the detriment of unwary subscribers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI GIRIDHAR GOMANGO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The main causes of excess billing complaints are as indicated below:—

1. Clerical errors and wrong feeding to computer.

2. Excess registration of calls in the meters because of technical faults.

3. Faulty circuit conditions.

4. Diversion of lines|malpractices.

(c) Although very few cases of diversion of lines have come into the notice of Department, the Department has taken the following steps to prevent such malpractice:—

1. Sealing of meters

2. Locking of Meter Rooms

3. Restriction of entry into M.D.F. Rooms

4. Locking of Distribution Points

5. Raising the level of Distribution Points

6. Formation of mobile vigilance squads to check malpractice..

Post and Telegraph office Buildings

3338. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Post and Telegraph Offices located in their own buildings and those in rented buildings in urban and rural areas;

(b) whether there is any proposal to go in for their own buildings; and

(c) if so, what is the target date for this both in urban and rural areas?